

THE LEGENDARY

4

HORSEMEN

RICHARD ALLEN

WILLIAM QUINN

DANIEL PAYNE

HENRY TURNER

of the
AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

By A. P. Marshall

MARLAN Publishers
Ypsilanti, Michigan
1995



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AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
(The Liberation Church)

by
A. P. Marshall

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DEDICATION

This booklet is dedicated to Pastor Jerry Hatter of Brown Chapel A. M. E. Church, Ypsilanti, Michigan. His deep faith, along with Divine intervention, led him to leave a lucrative position in industry and accept responsibility for a congregation in need of his skills, training and talents. Since his arrival, Brown Chapel has emerged as a "Church of the Future," prepared to serve the community with a full time ministry and with multiple services. I join with many members who offer their skills and efforts to help in that program.

Albert P. Marshall, Steward

ROOTS OF AFRICAN METHODISM

Methodism made its appearance in the American colonies about 1760. Twenty-four years later Thomas Coke was sent to the new country to spread the doctrine. At the Christmas Conference in Baltimore on December 24, 1784, Richard Allen was one of those present. Francis Asbury emerged as the first Bishop of the New American Conference.

Though it was fairly well known that Negroes participated in the Revolutionary War, many whites, including members of the Methodist Church, were not ready to accept them as equals in God's Church. At worship services, according to George A. Singleton, they were compelled to "occupy the gallery, the outer fringe, or some other designated place during the service. In some instances the slaves sat in the rear, which was partitioned off by a wooden screen." Eyeholes were cut into the boards through which they could see. On Communion Sundays, Negroes had to wait until all the whites were served.

Richard Allen was assigned to preach in the five a.m. services, and built a sizeable Negro membership. Opposition to their presence at regular services grew until an incident forced their withdrawal and triggered the formation of their own church -- Mother Bethel. This was the forerunner of African Methodism in the United States.

In 1816, The African Methodist Episcopal Church was formally organized, when delegates from several eastern cities with similar problems met at Philadelphia, PA, and Richard Allen emerged as Bishop.

Two hundred years have passed since the decision was made to withdraw from a church which did not want them and to form a church of their own. Many great men and women have played significant roles in the growth and enrichment of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Their strong commitment to service is manifested in the motto first enunciated by Bishop Richard Allen: GOD OUR FATHER, CHRIST OUR REDEEMER, MAN OUR BROTHER.

INTRODUCTION

In preparation for the observance of the two hundredth anniversary of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Vinton Anderson's suggestion of the "Four Horsemen of the Liberation Church" was certainly apropos. For anyone with even a cursory knowledge of the Church's history certainly is aware of its role in the freedom or liberation of a people.

It was his reference to the "Four Horsemen" which caught my attention. In a modern sense the reference could be made to the Knute Rockne coached team of the nineteen twenties, when the famed sports columnist Grantland Rice called attention to the Four Horsemen -- Harry Stuhldreher, Don Miller, Jim Crowley, and Elmer Layden. Coach Rockne had shocked the sports world by selecting four small players and then surprising every team they played with a foursome which was not only agile, but also unusually quick. Their victory over Army on October 18, 1924 led Rice to write: "They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another Army football team was swept over the precipice of the Polo Grounds yesterday afternoon."

Bishop Anderson likely had in mind the Biblical reference in which St. John uses the Four Horsemen to represent Famine, Pestilence, Destruction and Death. (Revelation 6:2-8; 19:11).

Vicente Blasco Ibanez, the Spanish writer, fictionalized World War I in a popular novel, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (Dutton, 1918).

Taking their cue from the sojourn on earth of The Living Christ, four men stand out in African Methodist Episcopal Church history for giving life and strength to the "Liberation Church." All bishops, their lives and their attitudes, were surely shaped by God to fit the times in which they lived. Other great men have starred on the stage of time, playing their roles in the

expansion of African Methodism. But standing above all are the lives of the first Bishop, Richard Allen; the fourth Bishop, William Paul Quinn; the sixth Bishop, Daniel Alexander Payne; and the twelfth Bishop, Henry M. Turner.

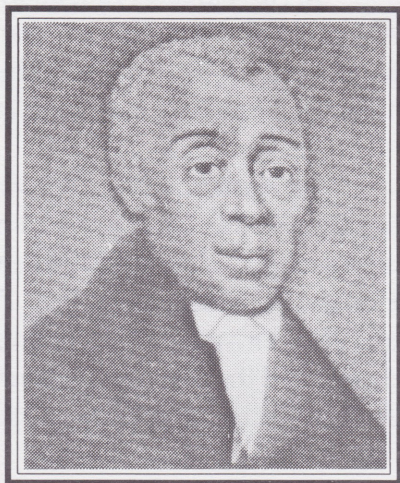
This booklet, dedicated to the memories of "The Four Horsemen of the Liberation Church," is meant to honor all of those leaders, clergy and lay, women as well as men, who have caught the vision during their time, and in so doing, left a vibrant, growing, loving, and Christian Church, not only for this generation, but for generations yet unborn. As our Church seeks to serve the God in which we believe, may we follow the admonition, "Do not go where the path may lead, but go where there is no path, and leave a trail."

Albert P. Marshall

June 20, 1995

RICHARD ALLEN

1760 - 1831



Richard Allen, an early convert to Methodism, was largely responsible for the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.), the first black, interstate organization in America. It was Allen on whom the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia called when a fever epidemic threatened the very existence of the city in 1793.¹ While serving as a religious and social leader, he was also a successful business man, and boasted of his nondependence upon the Church for a living. In his home, he entertained many of the leading citizens of Philadelphia.²

Allen was born in Philadelphia, PA on February 14, 1760, a slave of Judge Benjamin Chew. He was later sold, along with other members of his family, to a slave owner in Delaware. After his religious conversion, resulting from hearing Evangelist Freeborn Garretson, he influenced the conversion of his master. Richard and his brother were allowed to purchase their freedom for \$2,000.³

Allen drove a wagon carrying supplies to soldiers during the American Revolution, often stopping to preach wherever there were people willing to listen. He traveled throughout West Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and Delaware winning converts to Christianity.⁴

Affiliating with the Methodist Church, Allen was assigned by Bishop Francis Asbury to preach at the 5 A.M. services in 1786. His sermons became so popular that he sometimes spoke five times during Sabbath days.⁵

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In November, 1786, upon entering St. George's Church, Allen, Along with Absalom Jones, William White and Darius Ginnings were urged to get up from their knees during prayer and go to the balcony. This caused them to leave the church in protest against segregation practices.⁶

On April 17, 1787, Allen with the help of his friend, Absalom Jones, organized the Free African Society, a mutual aid and benefit organization.⁷ This was the forerunner of similar societies in New York, Boston, and Washington, DC. The organization forbade drunkenness, and disorderly conduct, encouraged strong marriage relationships, and denounced the practice of slavery. This became the forerunner of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

On July 7, 1791, Bethel Church was organized, and three years later an old blacksmith shop, reconditioned by members, was dedicated as a church.⁸ In 1799, Allen was ordained deacon by Bishop Asbury.⁹

Several other churches were organized under the African Methodist name in Maryland, New York, Delaware, and the District of Columbia, as well as other parts of the state of Pennsylvania.¹⁰

In 1804, Allen led in the organization of "The Society of Free People of Color For Promoting the Instruction and School Education of Children of African Descent."

During the War of 1812, Allen led in the construction of the defenses for the City of Philadelphia.

At the organizational meeting of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, in 1816, Allen was elected Bishop and presided until his death on March 26, 1831.¹¹

Bishop Allen served as the head of a committee which organized 3,000 persons to condemn the American Colonization Society's plan to send African Americans to Africa.

Bishop Allen was a strong supporter of *Freedom's Journal*, the first black newspaper in the United States. He played a leading role in the organization of the first Convention of People of Colour in April, 1830. He also served for a number of years as treasurer of the First African Masonic Lodge of Pennsylvania.¹²

Harassment did not escape Richard Allen as he championed causes of the oppressed. A story by Maria Child, published in the *A.M.E. Church Review*, indicates an extreme case which was not unusual for the time: "A Southern speculator ordered the amnesty of Bishop Allen, and claimed him to be a fugitive slave whom he had bought. The constable employed to serve the warrant was ashamed to drag the good man through the streets; and merely said, in a respectable tone: 'Mr. Allen, you will soon come down to Alderman Todd's office, will you?' The fugitive they were seeking, had absconded only a few years previous; and everybody in Philadelphia know that Richard Allen had been living there more than twenty years.

"Yet, the speculator and his sons swore unblushingly that he was the identical slave they had purchased. Mr. Allen thought he ought to have some redress for the outrage. 'For,' said he, 'if it had not been for the kindness of the officer, I might have been dragged through the streets like a felon.' Isaac T. Hopper was consulted, and a civil suit commenced. Eight hundred dollars bail was demanded, and the speculator, unable to procure it, was lodged in the debtor's prison. When he had been there three months, Mr. Allen caused him to be discharged, saying, 'he did not wish to persecute the man but merely to teach him not to take free people again, for the purpose of carying them into slavery.' "¹³

Allen's first wife was Flora, who died in 1799.¹⁴ Little is known about her. He then married Sarah, a native of the Isle of Wight, VA,¹⁵ about 1800. Four sons and two daughters were born to them. Sarah died at age 89 on July 16, 1849, in Philadelphia. "She was a faithful counselor to the young; the aged too met in her a friend sincere and true. Her house was the resort of brethren who labored in the ministry; and when weary and worn with burden of duty, they found a resting place indeed."

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Bishop James A. Handy relates a story which illustrates a facet of Sarah Allen's dedication: The first preachers sent out by Bishop Allen "returned in a seedy condition at the close of their first conference period of six months. Their condition was so revolting to the good Bishop that he refused to adjourn them for dinner. When he did adjourn them at night, and went home, Sarah, his wife, wanted an explanation as to why he had failed to bring the brethren to dinner. He stated to her their condition, and she gave them supper. After supper she seated them in the parlor, while she visited the sisters. In describing their condition, she said they had ventilators in their elbows, ventilators at their knees and ventilators in the seats of their trousers. She and the sisters bought a bolt of homespun cloth, and spent the night sewing. The next morning they had pants and jackets for the preachers, thereby making them presentable to go out and discharge their ministerial duties."¹⁶

Though there is no record of his education, Bishop Allen was unusually intelligent and thrifty. "From signatures on his deeds, we see that his handwriting was clear, and from his autobiography, we see that his English was good."¹⁷

Before his death, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Richard Allen charted the future for the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and the world. His worthy successor was Bishop Morris Brown.

Bishop Allen and his wife, Sarah, lie buried in Bethel A.M.E. Church, 6th and Lombard Streets in Philadelphia, PA. The first words of the inscription on the stone covering the tomb reads: "To the Memory of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen, first Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America and Founder of this church."

End notes

¹ George A. Singleton. *The Romance of African Methodism*. A.M.E. Press, 1985, 9; R. R. Wright. *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1963, 66.

² Singleton, *ibid.*, 9.

³ Wright, *Ibid.*, 49; Singleton, *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴ Wright, *Ibid.*, 50-52.

⁵ Wright, *Ibid.*, 53; Singleton, *Ibid.*, 15.

⁶ Wright, *Ibid.*, 54-55.

⁷ *D.M.C. 's Bicentennial Tribute*, p. 5.

⁸ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 59; Singleton, *Ibid.* p. 18.

⁹ Young, Henry J. *Major Black Religious Leaders*. Abingdon, 1977, 30; Wright, *Ibid.* p. 15.

¹⁰ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 64.

¹¹ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 65-66.

¹² Wright, *Ibid.* p. 70.

¹³ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 71-72.

¹⁴ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 69, 76.

¹⁵ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 75.

¹⁶ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 78.

¹⁷ Wright, *Ibid.* p. 70-71.

CHRIST CALLS MEN

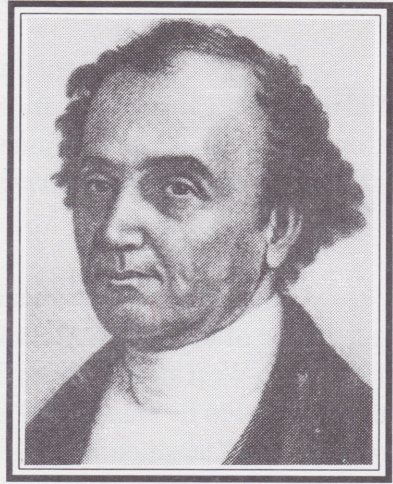
Christ calls the sons of men
to walk the way He trod,
Forsaking lesser loyalties
to seek the will of God.
Oh that, rejoicing, now as then,
they might respond, as
Christ calls men.

Christ calls the sons of men
of high and low estate,
The man forgotten in the throng,
the man the world holds great,
For they who heed His voice again,
arise transformed as
Christ calls men.

Christ calls the sons of men
who fear the tyrant's rod,
To build with sure and steadfast
hope,
'This nation under God.
So may the world be free again
redeemed by faith, as
Christ calls men.

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Rev. J. Allen Parker).

WILLIAM PAUL QUINN 1788 - 1873



William Paul Quinn, the fourth Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, is sometimes referred to as one of its "Four Horsemen." His influence on the spread of the gospel into "the West" was great. According to George A. Singleton, "He was the first to cross the Allegheny Mountains... to brave dangers, and was in peril of his life often."¹

Quinn was born in Calcutta, India, April 10, 1788, the son of a wealthy mahogany dealer and a Negro woman.² A female missionary of the Quaker faith is said to have had a great influence on his religious orientation.³ He was banished from home by his father because of conflicts in religious views. He went to New York via Gibraltar and Sheffield, England, and was converted in 1808 in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He was present at the 1816 organizational convention of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

He is said to have been "tall and erect, with slightly stooped shoulders. His well-formed head was covered with a shock of black, curly hair, and a well adorned bronze complexion. He wore upon his face a very gentle expression, full eyebrows, arched over keen piercing eyes, aquiline nose, firm mouth, and shapely skin. His physique was rugged and strong."⁴

Licensed to preach in 1812, Quinn was ordained Deacon in 1818, and Elder in 1838. He held circuit pastorates at Bushtown, Goldtown, Salem, and Springtown, New Jersey in 1828. A disagreement with Bishop

Richard Allen caused him to leave the church in 1828 for five years.⁵

After petitioning for readmission, he was reinstated at the Philadelphia Conference in 1833. He was transferred to the Ohio Conference where he continued as a circuit preacher while assigned pastor to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Washington, District of Columbia and Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

Quinn is said to have been the first preacher to ride a horse in the pursuance of his duties. Commissioned by Bishop Morris Brown in 1836 to go West and "build up the church", he proved to be the man for the job. Often he was forced to use his physical abilities to ward off rowdies and Klansmen who wished to do him harm. These interruptions sometimes took place in the midst of sermons.

In October, 1840, he became a member of the Indiana Conference which met at Blue River. Quinn was assigned to a circuit in Illinois, and made overseer of all circuits of Indiana as well as Illinois. In 1841, Elder Quinn was made assistant to Bishop Morris Brown. The Indiana General Conference of 1842 commended Elder Quinn for his work in starting new missions and churches.

At the Conference of 1844, Quinn surprised opposition delegates from the east with phenomenal reports of church growth under his supervision: 47 new churches established, 20 traveling elders, 27 local preachers, 2,080 new communicants, 50 Sunday Schools, 40 temperance societies, and 17 Camp Meetings in Indiana and Illinois, where the estimated number of coloreds was 18,000. This report won over the opposing eastern delegates and led to his election and consecration as the third Bishop, by Bishop Brown, aided by five selected Elders, on May 19, 1844.

Existing slave laws, including the notorious Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, held no fear for Bishop Quinn. The story is told of his preaching across the Mississippi River from Alton, Illinois, to the slaves in Missouri.

Quinn was sometimes ferried across the river around five o'clock

in the morning by a devout believer, Priscilla Baltimore, where he would attend prayer services at St. Paul Chapel, St. Louis.⁶

At the General Conference of 1848, Bishop Quinn suggested that the subject of women in the ministry be discussed. A motion to approve was defeated by a large majority. When the first assignments to Episcopal Districts were made, he was assigned to the Third District which included Indiana and Canada.

Quinn presided at the 1854 Convention at which a resolution was passed that condemned the Anti-Slavery Act of 1850. In 1856 and 1860, Bishop Quinn was assigned by the General Conference to preside over New York, Philadelphia and New England.

Both as a preacher and a Bishop, Quinn defied the rules of slavery by traveling into forbidden territory where he was instrumental in establishing new congregations. St. Louis and Louisville, Kentucky are good examples. He also organized the A.M.E. Missouri Conference.

Bishop Quinn was a Master Mason, a member in New York.⁷ Because of opposition from Quakers, a group in Richmond, Indiana was denied a place to hold meetings. The good prelate permitted the use of one of his churches. In gratitude, the lodge made him a patron saint, adopting Paul Quinn Lodge as its name.

Bishop Quinn remained Senior Bishop from the death of Bishop Morris Brown in 1849 until his own death on February 3, 1873.

Endnotes

¹ George A. Singleton, *The Romance of African Methodism*. A. M. E. Press, 1985, 116.

² Ibid., 71

³ Ibid., 71

⁴ Ibid., 71

⁵ R. R. Wright, *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1963, 283.

⁶ Singleton, Ibid. 72.

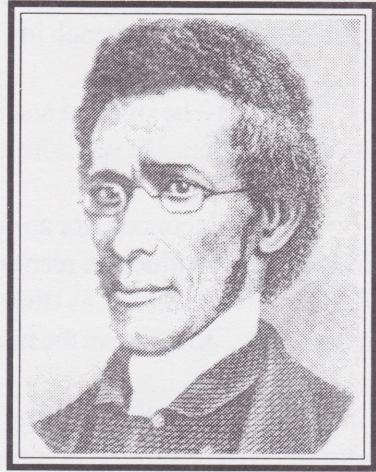
⁷ Ibid., 72.

UNTRODDEN PATHS

It is easy to foot the trodden path
Where thousands walked before.
It is simple to push my fragile bark
Past reefs of charted shore.
I find it good to ride the rod
Where others laid the trail.
It is well to test the ocean's strength
Where others also sail.
But when a dream enslaves a man,
A dream of the vast untrod,
A dream that says, 'Strike out with me,
Strike out or part with God;
A dream that leads to an untried path
Where unknown tempests blow,
And the only chart a man can boast
Is his will that bids him go;
Ah, then, my soul, bethink yourself,
For God has spread this scroll
To test the stuff of your rough-hewn faith,
And the fiber of your soul.

-P.R. Hayward

DANIEL ALEXANDER PAYNE
1811-1893



Daniel Alexander Payne, sixth Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, was dedicated to God by his parents before his birth. Even as a child, Daniel seemed destined to be the master teacher he became. Orphaned early, an aunt helped him continue his craving for learning. He opened a school for slave children, but was forced to close it, and in the course of his life opened several others. He urged the establishment of the first of several schools and colleges for African American children to be operated by the A. M. E. Church, setting the pattern for Church involvement in education for years to come. Wherever he traveled he encouraged new congregations, new schools and an education ministry.

Payne was born on February 24, 1811, in Charleston, South Carolina, the son of London and Martha Payne, both active in the Cumberland Street Methodist Church. He was sent to Minor's Moralist Society School, owned and maintained by free blacks of the city. His formal learning was interrupted by objections to the teaching of black children, but he was able to acquire proficiencies in reading, spelling, mathematics, English, Latin, Greek and the *Holy Bible*.

At age 18, young Payne opened a school for slave children, charging 50 cents per week per child. As his reputation spread, whites, afraid of the idea of educated slaves, forced its closing in 1835.¹

Payne moved to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1835, where he spent two years studying at the Lutheran Theological Seminary. He was then

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assigned to the Troy, New York Presbyterian Church in 1837, and was granted a license to preach in 1838.

In 1840 he opened a school in Philadelphia, and joined Bethel A.M.E. Church. He was admitted to full Eldership in 1842.

Payne's concern for an educated ministry was demonstrated when in 1843 he introduced a resolution to that effect which was adopted by the Conference. Later, as Bishop, he organized "A literary and historical association," to improve the ministry.²

In 1847, while serving as pastor of Bethel, Baltimore, Payne introduced a resolution favoring the establishment of a mission in West Africa.

At the General Conference of 1848, Payne was assigned to write the history of the A.M.E. Church. Not to be completed for several years, it was eventually published in 1891 as the *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, which covered the first 75 years.

In 1850, Elder Payne was sent to Ebenezer A.M.E. Church, Baltimore, but the members refused to receive him, saying, "he could not preach to please them."

In 1852, Elder Payne was elected and consecrated to the Bishopric after only nine years as an Elder.

In 1856, Bishop Payne was one of three A.M.E. representatives to serve on the board of the new Methodist College for Colored Students at Xenia, Ohio. When that closed, he bought the property in the name of the A.M.E. Church for \$10,000, and named it Wilberforce University. He served as President of the school from 1863 to 1876, "the first colored college president in America".

Bishop Payne was "dragged from the berth of a Pullman car" in 1860, while on his way from Xenia, Ohio to Baltimore, Maryland.³ In 1861 he was refused permission to hold his annual conference in

Baltimore because he was a citizen of Ohio. In 1861 he visited President Lincoln to urge him to sign the act to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and on April 13, 1863, he preached the sermon: "Thanksgiving For the Passage of the Bill".

In 1867 Bishop Payne was a delegate to the Evangelical Alliance in Amsterdam, and the International Anti-Slavery Conference in Paris.

In 1876, he resigned active leadership of Wilberforce, but continued as Chancellor as well as Dean of the School of Theology. With more time for his own pursuits, he wrote two of his greatest works: *A Treatise On Domestic Education*, (1885) and *Recollections of Seventy Years* (1888).

In 1878, Bishop Payne ordered the Pastor of Bethel, Baltimore, to make Responsive Reading a part of the regular public worship.

In 1881, Bishop Payne attended the First Ecumenical Conference of Methodism held in London. He presided at one of the sessions. He also attended the 1891 Conference.

Bishop Payne was a member of the World's Congress of Religions held at the 1893 World's Fair in the City of Chicago. He was stricken shortly after his return home, and died on November 2, 1893.

Bishop Payne wrote the following of an experience: "I was in my humble chamber, pouring out my prayers into the listening ears of the Savior, when I felt as if the hands of a man were pressing my two shoulders and a voice speaking within my soul, saying: 'I have set thee apart to educate thyself in order that thou mayest be an educator to thy people'".

His associates considered Bishop Payne to be the "intellectual leader of the A.M.E. Church. He was the first Bishop to have systematic theological training. Though he did not finish the entire course of study at Gettysburg, he had no equal in the Church in theological knowledge." One of his greatest achievements, according to his own assessment, was

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the organization of the "Mother's Association,... the aim of these was to aid one another in training their children, especially their daughters."

Twice married, Bishop Payne's first wife died shortly after bearing their only child. In 1854, he married Mrs. Eliza J. Clark, a widow with three children, who had lived in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Bishop Payne was a poet of some ability, having published a book of poems in 1830. As a teacher, he "was a man of high ideals, intense piety, strong convictions and studious habits." He has been described as "slender with small hands and feet, almost feminine in form, delicate, keen black eyes, shaded by colored glasses, straight nose, small mouth with lips which were constantly twitching. He wore his hair long. His complexion was a deep olive."

Endnotes

¹ R. R. Wright. *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1963, 267.

² Ibid.; 277.

³ Ibid., 278.

HENRY MCNEAL TURNER
1834-1915



The career of Henry McNeal Turner, the twelfth Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, was a varied one indeed. He went from the cotton fields of South Carolina to an apprenticeship, to a blacksmith, to a chaplaincy in the US Army, to the Georgia State Senate, to the Bishopric of the A.M.E. Church, and to the leadership of the Back to Africa Movement. He was fortunate to attract the attention of several sources of learning, and these played important roles in preparing him for future leadership in the A.M.E. Church. For his work, he has been designated as one of the "Four Horsemen" of the A.M.E. Church.

Henry was born on February 1, 1834, the son of free parents, near Newberry, Abbeville County, SC. His parents were Hardy and Sarah (Green) Turner. Because his grandfather was a kidnapped African Prince, and South Carolina was at that time a part of the British Empire which forbade the enslavement of royalty, he was given his freedom.¹ Henry was also convinced that his mother was descended from royalty, perhaps accounting for his life-long interest in Africa.

The early death of his father forced Henry to go to work in the cotton fields. For a short period of time he also served as a blacksmith's apprentice. Friendly whites taught him to read. A local white woman, employed by his mother to instruct him, was threatened with imprisonment for illegally teaching a black. That was an important factor in the shaping of Henry's contempt for those who objected to progress among his people. His thirst for learning was sharpened when he was employed

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in a local law office. Exposed to books and discussions with his employers, he sharpened his skills immensely. Here he learned the *Bible*, history, geography, mathematics, and a bit of astronomy, which served as a foundation for his later study of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.

Since Abbeville was too small to support his ambitions, friends aided him in finding employment in the Medical College of Baltimore, Maryland, where he studied hygiene, anatomy, and physiology. He also read in law and theology, getting a working knowledge in all of them.

In 1851, Turner joined the Methodist Church South, a membership which provided him with the opportunity to travel through several Southern states unmolested. He was ordained to the ministry in that church in 1853. He then joined the A.M.E. Church Conference then in session. Turner was assigned to the pastorate of the Baltimore Mission, where he remained four years.

Turner was ordained a Deacon in 1860, an Elder in 1862. While in Baltimore, he studied English grammar, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and German at Trinity College. He also took special lessons in oratory from Bishop George David Cummins, of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1860, Elder Turner urged his parishioners to support the Union Army. His later efforts towards the enlistment of blacks brought him to the attention of President Abraham Lincoln, who appointed him Chaplain to the First Regiment, US Colored Troops, the first African American to hold that post. President Johnson later appointed him to a chaplaincy in the Regular Army, assigned to the Freedmen's Bureau in Georgia.²

Believing strongly that politics and religious doctrine must be implemented in a practical way, Turner called the first Republican State Convention in Georgia, and in 1867 was elected to the State Constitutional Convention. From 1868 to 1870, he served as a State Senator. He desired equal rights for his people, and was unwilling to settle for anything less. His arguments were based upon the *Bible* and principles of the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, the

Bill of Rights, and the Will of God.

At the close of the war, Bishop Payne appointed Turner as the Presiding Elder over the A.M.E. Church of the State of Georgia. From one existing church, St. Phillips of Savannah, he reported in 1872: "I have received during and since the war about sixteen or seventeen thousand full members in the A.M.E. Church."

Turner is also credited with the establishment of the A.M.E. Book Concern in Philadelphia. He also was President of Morris Brown College for 12 years. Meanwhile, he published *The Christian Recorder*, *Turner's Word Hymn Book*, *Turner's Catechism*, and the *A.M.E. Musical Hymnal*.

Following a period of establishing hundreds of A.M.E. Churches throughout the South, Henry McNeal Turner was elected and consecrated Bishop in 1880, over the opposition of Bishop Payne.³ Thus began a shift of power in the Church to the South.

In addition to his assignment in 1880 to the Eighth District (Mississippi, Northern Mississippi, Arkansas and Indian Territory), Bishop Turner accepted assignment to oversee work in West Africa.

Bishop Turner founded *The Southern Christian Recorder*, the *Voice of Missions*, and the *Women's Christian Recorder*. He wrote the *Negro in All Ages*, which required extensive research. He served as the Historiographer during the years 1908-1912.

Turner's disillusionment with the government of the United States began about 1874, when he joined the African Colonization Society, of which he was a Vice-President.⁴ With permission from authorities, he held the first Church Conference in Africa in 1898 and made possible the later work of Bishop Levi Coppin.

As Senior Bishop from 1895 to 1915, he inspired the organization of the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society in 1896.

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Bishop Turner stood about 5 feet 10 inches, and weighed between 180 and 200 pounds. His complexion was a light brown, he had a fine oratorical voice, and was fluent in speech.

Between 1891 and 1898, Bishop Turner made four trips to Africa, and lectured on three continents. He wrote that "A man who loves a country that hates him is a human dog and not a man." Though the estimated number in the Back to Africa Movement was never more than 25,000, many people were familiar with the program. The Bishop's appearance as speaker always drew large crowds.

Married first to Eliza Ann Peacher in 1856, two sons and two daughters were born to them. When his wife died in 1889, Bishop Turner married Martha Elizabeth DeWitt. Following her death he married Harriet A. Wayman, widow of Bishop Wayman. His fourth wife was Laura Pearl Lemon who was with him until his death. He died on May 9, 1915, after collapsing on the wharf at Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

Endnotes

¹ R. R. Wright. *The Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. The A.M.E. Sunday School Union, 1968, 329.

² Ibid., 332.

³ Ibid., 337.

⁴ George A. Singleton. *The Romance of African Methodism*. A.M.E. Press, 125.

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